

range. Jayson and Christopher (1995) reported the species from Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary at an altitude of 600 m, Rajagopalan (1968) reported the species at lower altitudes, and Divya Mudappa (pers. comm.) from Kalakkad and Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve at an altitude of 1100 m.

These reports show that the species occurs over a wider altitudinal range than was previously thought. Rajagopalan (1968) reported the species to be a pest

in arecanut plantations. However, we have been able to trap the species only from relatively undisturbed rainforests, suggesting that this endemic species might be sensitive to habitat disturbance.

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A. PRABHAKAR

*Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology &  
Natural History,*

*Kalampalayam P.O. Coimbatore 641 010.*

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## 11. INDIAN ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS *RHINOCEROS UNICORNIS* LINNAEUS 1758, IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

(With one map)

Arunachal Pradesh is by and large not an ideal rhino habitat but stray animals have often been sighted in different areas, especially at the edge of the hills, near Assam border. Stray rhinos used to occur in the upper Dihing Valley (part of present Namdapha National Park) in Changlang district and in southern Tirap (Gee, 1964: WILDLIFE OF INDIA). However, specific identification of those stray animals could not be ascertained and there is a possibility of those animals being Sumatran rhino *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*.

I report here the occurrence of the Indian one-horned rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* Linn. in Arunachal Pradesh in recent years, observed during field surveys in different parts of the state, which are listed below chronologically:

1978. A female rhino with a calf was sighted in Sonai-Rupai Sanctuary of Assam (not a notified protected area) by the Forest staff (T. Nath, pers. comm.). The location was not far from the border of West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.

1986. A female with a grown-up calf sighted in Dulung Reserve Forest (RF) of Lakhimpur district of Assam. The location was near Assam-Arunachal Pradesh interstate border.

1987. A rhino suddenly appeared in Panir RF of Lower Subansiri district (now Papum Pare district). It first came to Kakoi RF of Assam then followed the Joihing river up to Arunachal Pradesh.

April-May, 1990. A lone rhino stayed for more than a month in Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary of East Kameng district. It came via Nameri Wildlife Sanctuary of Assam.

September, 1990. Two rhinos strayed out of Kaziranga National Park and travelled through Sonitpur district to Papum RF of East Kameng district. On their way they crossed the Brahmaputra river, some tea estates, villages and forests. Later on they were chased back to Khatonibari Soil Conservation Area in Sonitpur district, on the opposite bank of Kaziranga National Park by the staff of the Assam Forest Department.

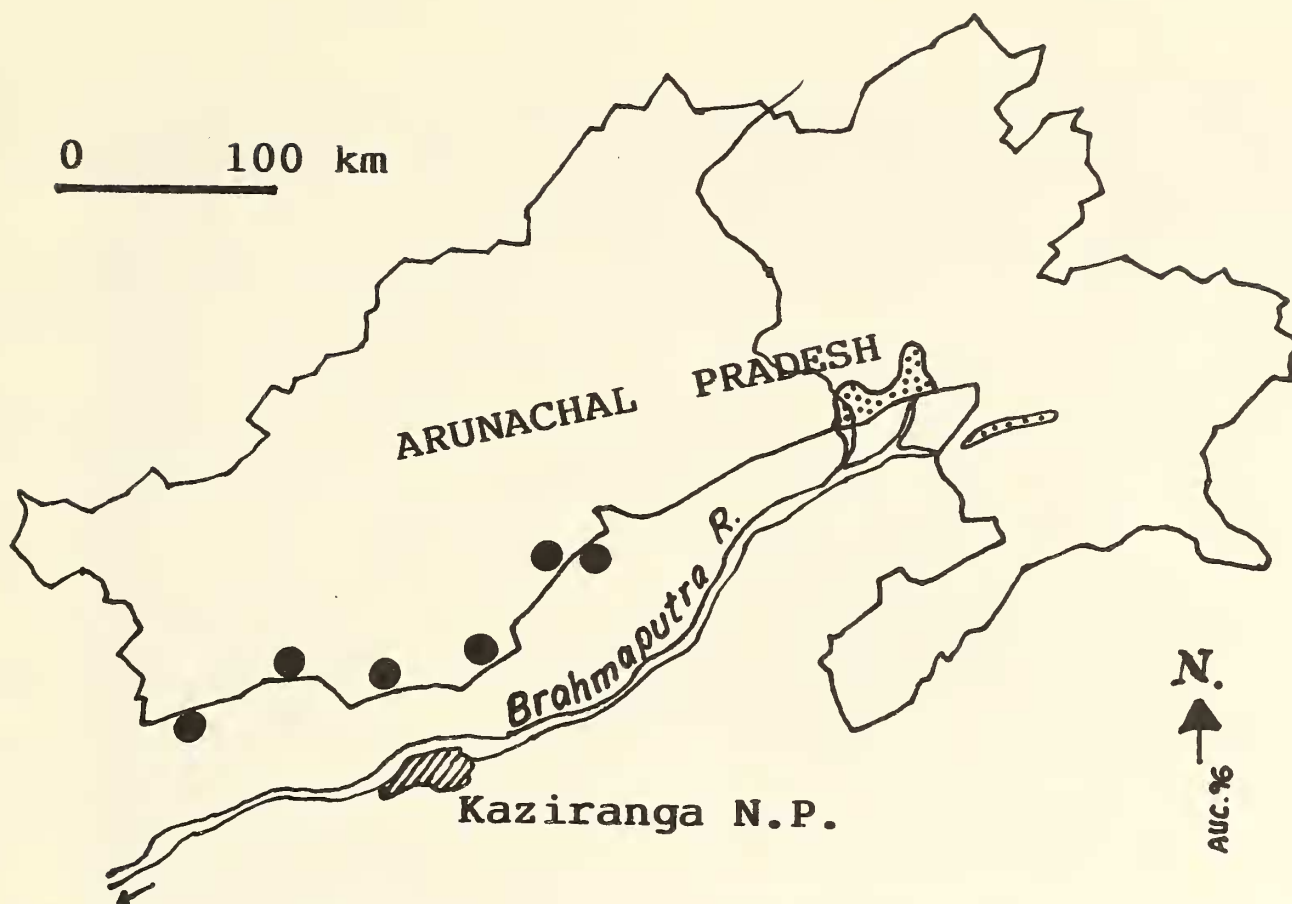


Fig. 1. Map showing the recorded localities of *Rhinoceros unicornis* (●) and the distribution of grassland (▨).

January, 1995. A lone rhino travelled through Narayanpur area of Lakhimpur district of Assam to Drupong RF of Papum Pare district, Arunachal Pradesh. In all probability it was from Kaziranga National Park, as every year a few from this national park wander up to Narayanpur area. It stayed in Drupong RF and adjacent areas of Torajuli (near Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border) for a week (mostly in the valley of the Pichola river). However, it fell to poachers near Narayanpur while coming back.

The above records suggest that the *Rhinoceros unicornis* sporadically wanders into Arunachal Pradesh although none of the recorded areas are

suitable habitat for the species. The only large patch of grassland in Arunachal Pradesh is found near the confluence of the Siang, Lohit and the Dihing rivers covering parts of D'Ering Wildlife Sanctuary, Dibang RF and adjacent riverine areas (about 220 sq km) but there is no evidence of any recent occurrence of the rhino from these areas.

October 22, 1996

ANWARUDDIN  
CHOUDHURY

Near Gate No. 1 of Nehru Stadium,  
Islampur Road,  
Guwahati 781 007, Assam.

## 12. A BAT EATING COMMUNITY OF CHHATARPUR DISTRICT OF MADHYA PRADESH

(With one plate)

During the Parliamentary election 1993 I was posted to village Patha of Damoh district as presiding officer. One of my polling officers K.C. Ahirwal,

Asst. Veterinary Field officer, told me about the killing (he termed it suicide) of "birds" in the forests, near Bakswaha in District Chhatarpur during winter